



## **U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management**

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<http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/fo/ado.html>

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### **Campbell Tract Birch Meadow Trail Surfacing and Reroute** Bureau of Land Management DOI-BLM-AK-010-2011-0024-CX

**Applicant: BLM**  
**Case File Number: AA-092332**



**Location:**  
T. 12 N., R. 3 W., Sec. 3, Seward Meridian  
Campbell Tract, Anchorage, Alaska

**Prepared By:**  
Jorjena Daly  
Outdoor Recreation Planner  
May 2011

**I. PURPOSE AND NEED**

**Birch Meadow Trail Surface Hardening**

This is a natural surface trail that experiences entrenchment and erosion, which leads to a muddy, rutted trail surface. This trail has multiple sections where widening and braiding have enhanced resource damage from users who try to avoid mud and ruts. Surfacing would help to address the entrenched trail sections that are often soft and muddy as well as define the path of travel. This would discourage future trail widening and braiding thus, addressing resource damage along the trail.

**Birch Meadow Trail Re-route**

There is a 135-foot section of this trail that climbs directly up the fall line to join Lore Road Trail. This section experiences deep entrenchment and erosion due to poor available drainage. A re-route would provide a less steep, curvilinear climbing turn with improved drainage that would be more sustainable in the long-term and require less maintenance.

**II. PROPOSED ACTIONS**

**Birch Meadow Trail**

The proposed action is to re-route 135 feet of Birch Meadow trail and surface its entire length, approximately 1,450 feet. The proposed actions would occur during the months of May through September.

The surfacing project would first utilize geotextile cloth as a permeable base to hold a gravel surface cap. Roughly 100 ton of gravel would be placed at a depth of six inches and width of 18-20 inches over the approximately 1,450 feet of trail. Once the defined trail bed has been surfaced and compacted, old braided and wide sections of trail would be revegetated to discourage social trails to the nearby Little Campbell Creek.

The re-route project would occur in an area where the existing trail climbs directly up the fall line to join Lore Road trail. The re-route would address the current drainage and erosion issue by decreasing the trail grade and creating a gentler, climbing turn. Two to three incidental trees may require removal at the re-route section depending upon a trial run with local equestrians.

**III. LAND STATUS**

These trails are located on the Campbell Tract, which is under the jurisdiction of the BLM by withdrawal from the Federal public domain for BLM administrative use as directed by PLO 7471 which expires in 2022.

**IV. CONSULTATION (INTERNAL/EXTERNAL) & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

The proposed trail surfacing would occur over existing natural surface trail. The two short sections of trail re-route include areas of new ground disturbance. Due to these proposed projects being an outcome of suggestions from attendees at regular Far North Bicentennial Park Trail User Group meetings, it was determined that further public involvement was not necessary.

**INTERNAL REVIEW**

Internal scoping was conducted by appropriate AFO staff and the evaluations/clearances follow.

**CULTURAL**

The proposed undertaking has no potential to affect historic properties; there are no eligible sites within the Area of Potential Effect (APE) of the proposed project.

Jenny Blanchard, BLM Archaeologist for the Anchorage Field Office, has reviewed the undertaking and made a reasonable effort to identify historic properties in the proposed APE. As detailed in the "Report of Determinations Under section 106 of the NHPA," the AFO Archaeologist has determined that the proposed project will have no effect to historic properties. The BLM, AFO Archaeologist is familiar with the CTF, and has walked the entire Birch Meadow Trail, as well as the proposed reroute areas for the Birch Meadow and Salmon Run Trails. There are no cultural resources within the proposed APEs, and most areas have been previously impacted by long-term recreation. This project falls under parameters set by the *Alaska State Protocol Agreement* as a routine undertaking, and information on the undertaking will be provided to the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office on an annual basis, as outlined in the *State Protocol Agreement*.

## WILDLIFE

Bruce Seppi, Anchorage Field Office Wildlife Biologist, has reviewed the proposed action and determined that wildlife will not be adversely affected by this proposed action.

The impact of the proposed action and alternatives on threatened and endangered plants and animals and their habitats has been evaluated in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. Based on currently available information, the proposed action would not affect any threatened or endangered species or their habitats. Therefore, no consultation with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service is considered necessary pursuant to Section 7 of the Act and none will be undertaken.

## SUBSISTENCE

The proposed action does occur on Federal public lands as defined in ANILCA Sec 102(3) and does fall under the regulatory authority of the Federal Subsistence Board. However, Campbell Tract falls within the Anchorage Management Area in Game Management Unit 14C and is closed to subsistence taking of wildlife as per the Subsistence Management Regulations for the harvest of wildlife on public lands in Alaska. Subsistence use of fisheries is unaffected by this proposal as no Federal Navigable Waters occur on Campbell Tract. Non-navigable waters affected by this proposal do not provide harvestable fish or shellfish subsistence resources.

Therefore, at this time, the proposed action will not significantly restrict Federal subsistence uses, decrease the abundance of Federal subsistence resources, or limit qualified Federal subsistence user access from currently existing conditions. No further analysis is necessary at this time.

## VEGETATION

BLM is responsible to ensure that invasive species management activities are integrated into all BLM programs that may be affected by or cause the establishment or spread of undesirable species.<sup>1</sup>

The proposed trail work impacts to vegetation will involve primarily the potential introduction new and spread of existing non-native plant species. Potential is high for transporting non-native species to the proposed worksites, as well as invigorating and spreading the known, existing infestations. Trail construction equipment, tools and surfacing materials are the typical vector for introduction and spread of non-native invasive species. Ground disturbance in known infestations will invigorate the already existing populations, and if equipment is not thoroughly cleaned at each worksite prior to moving to the next, the likelihood of infestation spread and new infestation introductions is high. Additionally, if trail surfacing materials (D-1 for example) are brought on site from an infested source, the potential for new introductions is high. Since there are very few known certified weed-free sources for gravel and such needed surfacing materials, the likelihood for new invasions is high. As unused gravel piles are stored at various locations around Campbell Tract, these piles will be monitored for infestations and treated.

The species of concern in the Birch Meadow project area are:

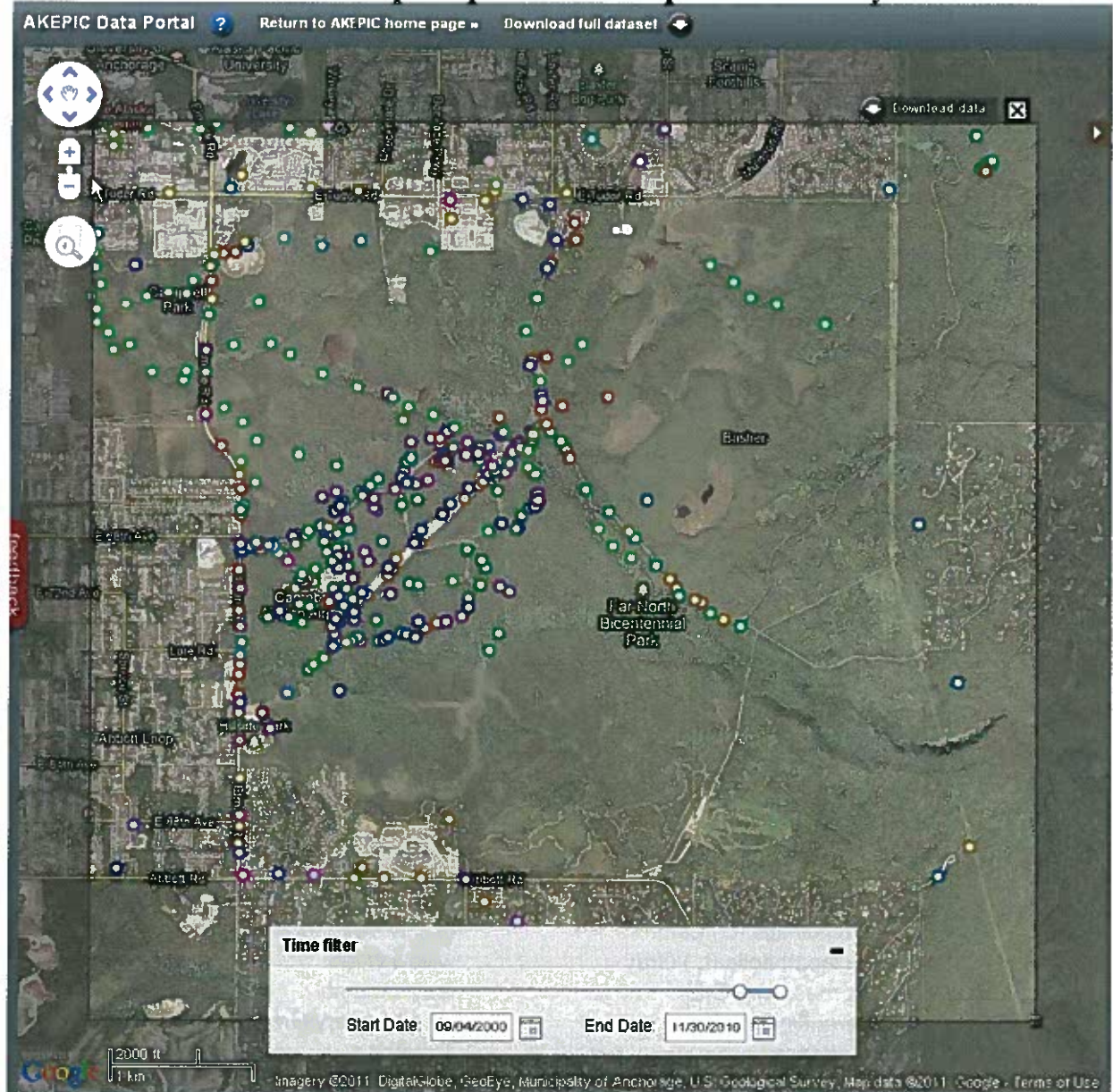
<i>Crepis tectorum</i> L.	annual hawksbeard
<i>Melilotus alba</i> Medikus	white sweet clover
<i>Trifolium repens</i> L.	white clover
<i>Stellaria media</i> (L.) Vill.	common chickweed
<i>Phleum pratense</i> L.	Timothy

Of these species of concern, annual hawksbeard and white sweet clover have the two highest invasiveness score, and therefore the greatest potential to cause significant ecological damage if best management practices during construction are not followed. Monitoring and mitigation for several years after the project is critical to keep these species from becoming established in the riparian corridor in this project vicinity.

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<sup>1</sup> 2010 BLM Alaska Invasive Species Management Policy

**Known infestations of non-native plant species in the Campbell Tract Vicinity<sup>2</sup>**



**Known Non-Native Species Infestations in Campbell Tract vicinity:**

**Scientific name**

*Alopecurus pratensis* L.  
*Amaranthus retroflexus* L.  
*Bromus hordeaceus* L.  
*Bromus inermis* Leyss.

**Common name**

meadow foxtail  
redroot pigweed  
soft brome  
smooth brome

<sup>2</sup> <http://aknhp.uaa.alaska.edu/maps/akepic.php>

<i>Brassica rapa</i> L.	field mustard
<i>Caragana arborescens</i> Lam.	Siberian peashrub
<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i> (L.) Medik.	shepherd's purse
<i>Cerastium fontanum</i> Baumg. ssp. <i>vulgare</i> (Hartm.) Greuter & Burdet	big chickweed
<i>Cerastium glomeratum</i> Thuill.	sticky chickweed
<i>Centaurea montana</i> L.	perennial cornflower
<i>Chenopodium album</i> L.	lamb's quarters
<i>Cirsium arvense</i> (L.) Scop.	Canada thistle
<i>Crepis tectorum</i> L.	annual hawksbeard
<i>Descurainia sophia</i> (L.) Webb ex Prantl	tansy mustard
<i>Elymus repens</i> (L.) Gould	quackgrass
<i>Elymus sibiricus</i> L.	Siberian wild rye
<i>Erucastrum gallicum</i> (Willd.) O.E. Schulz*	common dogmustard
<i>Galeopsis tetrahit</i> L.	brittlestem hempnettle
<i>Hieracium aurantiacum</i> L.	orange hawkweed
<i>Hieracium umbellatum</i> L.	narrow-leaf Hawkweed
<i>Hordeum jubatum</i> L.	foxtail barley
<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i> L.	cat's-ears
<i>Lamium album</i> L.	white deadnettle
<i>Lamium album</i> L.	white deadnettle
<i>Lepidium densiflorum</i> Schrad.	common pepperweed
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i> Lam.	ox-eye daisy
<i>Linaria vulgaris</i> P. Mill.	butter and eggs
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i> L.	bird's foot trefoil
<i>Lolium perenne</i> L. ssp. <i>multiflorum</i> (Lam.) Husnot	Italian rye grass
<i>Lolium perenne</i> L. ssp. <i>perenne</i>	perennial rye grass
<i>Lupinus polyphyllus</i> Lindl.	large-leaf lupine
<i>Matricaria discoidea</i> DC	pineappleweed
<i>Melilotus alba</i> Medikus	white sweet clover
<i>Melilotus officinalis</i> (L.) Lam.	yellow sweet clover
<i>Persicaria lapathifolia</i> (L.) Gray	willow weed
<i>Persicaria maculosa</i> Gray	lady's-thumb
<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i> L.	Reed Canary Grass
<i>Phleum pratense</i> L.	Timothy
<i>Plantago major</i> L.	common plantain
<i>Poa annua</i> L.	annual bluegrass
<i>Polygonum aviculare</i> L.	knotweed
<i>Polygonum convolvulus</i> L.	black bindweed, wild buckwheat
<i>Poa pratensis</i> L. ssp. <i>irrigata</i> (Lindm.) H. Lindb. or <i>Poa pratensis</i> L. ssp. <i>pratensis</i>	spreading bluegrass or Kentucky bluegrass
<i>Prunus padus</i> L.	European birdcherry
<i>Prunus virginiana</i> L.	chokecherry
<i>Ranunculus repens</i> L.	creeping buttercup
<i>Rumex acetosella</i> L.	sheep sorel
<i>Rumex acetosella</i> L.	sheep sorel

Rumex crispus L.	curled dock
Rumex longifolius DC.	garden dock
Saponaria officinalis L.	bouncingbet
Senecio sylvaticus L.	woodland ragwort
Senecio vulgaris L.	common groundsel
Silene armeria L.	sweet William silene
Silene dioica (L.) Clairville	red catchfly
Sonchus arvensis L.	Perennial Sowthistle
Spergula arvensis L.	spurry
Stellaria media (L.) Vill.	common chickweed
Taraxacum officinale F.H. Wigg. ssp. officinale	common dandelion
Tanacetum vulgare L.	common tansy
Trifolium hybridum L.	alsike clover
Tripleurospermum inodorum (L.) Sch. Bip.	scentless false mayweed
Trifolium pratense L.	red clover
Trifolium repens L.	white clover
Vicia cracca L.	bird vetch, dog pea

## V. LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE

The area within which the Proposed Actions would take place is covered by the following land use plan:

*Ring of Fire Record of Decision and Approved Management Plan – Anchorage Field Office, Alaska*, dated March 2008.

The Proposed Actions are consistent with the objectives outlined in the document and is not in conflict with other resources in the area. The document (BLM, p. ROD-10, 2008) dictates that "...Management of this [Campbell Tract] administrative site would continue to be guided by:

*A Management Plan for Public Use and Resource Management on the BLM Campbell Tract Facility*" (BLM 1988).

This plan covers twenty management actions that make up the management program for the administrative site. The proposed trail actions are in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision:

Action RM-5: Trail maintenance

Perform trail maintenance as needed.

b. Perform corrective maintenance as necessary, including drainage and trail hardening.

## VI. NEPA REVIEW

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM2 apply.

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with (BLM 2008);

Department of Interior Categorical Exclusion (516 DM 2, Appendix 1, 1.7):

"Routine and continuing government business, including such things as supervision, administration, operations, maintenance and replacement activities having limited context and intensity; e.g., limited size and magnitude or short term effects."



Bureau of Land Management Categorical Exclusion (516 DM 11.9, D.10 & G.2):

D.10: Vegetation management activities, such as seeding, planting, invasive plant removal, installation of erosion control devices...when the activity is necessary for the management of vegetation on public lands.

G.2: Installation of routine signs, markers, culverts, ditches, waterbars, gates, or cattleguards on/or adjacent to roads and trails identified in any land use or transportation plan, or eligible for incorporation in such plan.

## VII. REFERENCES

BLM (2008) *Ring of Fire Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan*, US Department of Interior, BLM, Anchorage Field Office, March 2008.

BLM (1988) *Management Plan for Public Use and Resource Management on the Bureau of Land Management Campbell Tract Facility*, June, 1988.

BLM (2008) *National Environmental Policy Act Handbook H-1790-1*, January, 2008.

## VIII. DECISION AND RATIONALE ON ACTION

I have decided to implement the proposed actions to surface the entire length of Birch Meadow trail, re-route a portion of Birch Meadow trail, and clear and surface a short, new re-route for Salmon Run trail with the following Conditions of Approval (COAs):

- Every effort should be made to use weed-free gravel/surfacing materials for project needs.

The above COAs and/or terms and conditions provide justification for this decision and may not be segregated from project implementation without further NEPA review. In addition, I have reviewed the plan conformance statement and have determined that the proposed activity is in conformance with the applicable land use plan(s). Further, I have reviewed the proposal to ensure the appropriate exclusion category has been correctly applied. It is my determination that no further environmental analysis is required.



Matthew S. Varner  
Field Manager, Acting

5/25/2011

Date

### Administrative Review or Appeal Opportunities

This decision is subject to administrative review in accordance with 43 CFR 3165. Any request for administrative review of this decision must include information required under 43 CFR 3165.3(b) (State Director Review), including all supporting documentation. Such a request must be filed in writing with the State Director, Bureau of Land Management, Alaska State Office, 222 West 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7504, no later than 20 business days after this Decision Record is received or considered to have been received.

Any party who is adversely affected by the State Director's decision may appeal that decision to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, as provided in 43 CFR 3165.4.